In December, 1999 the Government of India had set up a Central team led by the Chairman, Ganga Flood Control Commission (GFCC) for assessment of critical anti erosion problems in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. The team identified critical sites/ reaches and recommended anti erosion measures to be taken up immediately by State Governments. With a view to provide financial assistance to the States to carry out these measures, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme titled "Critical anti erosion works in Ganga Basin States and raising and strengthening of embankments along Kosi and Gandak rivers" at an estimated cost of Rs. 159.33 crore has been formulated by the Ministry of Water Resources, which is in operation.

Impact of shifting foreign exchange division of SBI to Mumbai

*140. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign exchange division of State Bank of India located in Kolkata was shifted to Mumbai;

(b) if so, whether the said shift has led to any improvement in the foreign exchange business of the bank;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government are aware of the fact that some other banks have also followed suit and shifted their foreign exchange divisions from Kolkata; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and Government's views on the likely impact of these decisions on the investment climate of West Bengal and the remedial action contemplated?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASWANT SINHA): (a) to (c) State Bank of India (SBI) has reported that while its Foreign Department continues to function at Kolkata, its inter-bank foreign exchange dealing and cover operation functions were shifted to Mumbai with effect from 12th October 1998, as part of the Bank's integration of its treasury operations. This has enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in the Bank's treasury operations, substantially improved the yield on deployment of Bank's surplus rupee resources and resulted in substantial interest income over and above the foreign exchange income of the Bank. The Bank has further reported that its

forex turnover has gone up substantially since the re-organisation of its treasury operations.

(d) No, Sir, No other Public Sector Bank had its foreign exchange division in Kokkata.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Airports in Bihar

† 931. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the Airports in Bihar where passenger and cargo facilities would be provided after their expansion;

(b) if so, the detils thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Gaya Airport.

(b) and (c) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has taken up the work for recarpetting/strengthening of runway at Gaya Airport at the estimated cost of Rs. 15 Crores and the work is likely to be completed by November 2001. After completion of work airport will be suitable for operation of AB-320 class of aircraft. The work for construction of operational boundary wall is in progress at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.45 Crores and likely to be completed by November, 2001. AAI is also constructing a new terminal building with all modern passenger facilities to cater to 300 passengers at a time and car park area at the cost of Rs. 17 Crores.

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.